



M E D I A R E L E A S E

STATE OF TENNESSEE
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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TENNESSEE RECEIVES \$1.4 MILLION IN EMERGENCY HEATING ASSISTANCE *FUNDS TO BENEFIT THOUSANDS OF ELIGIBLE LOW INCOME FAMILIES*

NASHVILLE --The Tennessee Department of Human Services was recently awarded more than one million dollars for the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP). The emergency aid for heating assistance was approved by Congress this week in anticipation of higher heating fuel costs during the upcoming season. The benefits will be made available through the 19 local community agencies that administer LIHEAP funds. The funds are specifically earmarked for winter heating bills.

"Despite record high summer temperatures, it's already time to plan for cold winter months," said DHS Commissioner Gina Lodge. "Staying warm isn't easy for a lot of Tennesseans, because many simply can't afford the high cost of heating their homes. These additional LIHEAP dollars will go a long way toward keeping some of the state's most vulnerable individuals warm and safe during the upcoming winter season."

LIHEAP is 100% federally funded through a grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Eligibility for LIHEAP benefits is based on established federal poverty guidelines, and documentation of household income is required. Tennesseans whose household income does not exceed 125 percent of federal poverty guidelines (that's \$25,000/year for a family of four) are potentially eligible for the program. The assistance does not go directly to the client. Instead, it is made in the form of a payment to the utility company or home energy provider. If eligible, the client could receive up to two payments a year.

More than 60,000 Tennessee families are assisted each year through the LIHEAP program.

For a list of local LIHEAP agencies where applications for heating assistance can be made, please click on the following link: <http://state.tn.us/humanserv/adfam/liheap-agencies.pdf>

For more information about the Department of Human Services and its programs, please click on the following link: <http://www.state.tn.us/humanserv>

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